

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 10748 281541Z
ACTION NEA-07

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R 281219Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6659

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FOR NEA ONLY

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: APER ELAB EG
SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE POSITION TO CAIRO

REF: STATE 149093

1. APPRECIATE POINTS MADE REFTTEL, BUT I CONTINUE TO BE
AGAINST THE ASSIGNMENT OF A REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE TO CAIRO.
SITUATION SET FORTH CAIRO 3539 STILL OBTAINS. WITH BROD'S
GROWING EXPERIENCE IN LABOR FIELD, I FRANKLY HAVE NOT MISSED
ANY OF THE SERVICES RENDERED TO US BY PREVIOUS REGIONAL
INCUMBENT. THEY WERE IN ANY CASE MARGINAL TO THIS MISSION.
IF OTHER POSTS BELIEVE THEY ARE BEING SHORT-CHANGED BECAUSE
OF ABSENCE OF REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE, I WOULD THINK THAT ONE
OR ANOTHER COULD SOMEHOW HOST THE POSITION.

2. IF IT COMES TO HOUSING AND OFFICE SPACE SHORTAGES, I
THINK WE RANK AS HIGH AS ANY POST IN THAT AREA WITH OUR
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BURGEONING AID STAFF AND OUR OBSOLETE FACILITIES. EACH
NEW POSITION POSES A MAJOR HEADACHE FOR US IN TERMS OF
LOGISTIC SUPPORT. THIS IS THE PRINCIPAL REASON WHY I
HAVE PERSONALLY VETTED EVERY POSITION CAREFULLY IN ORDER
TO ENSURE (A) THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL TO OUR
MISSION AND (B) THAT IT IS EXCLUSIVELY EGYPT PROGRAM
ORIENTED. REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE MEETS NEITHER OF

THESE CRITERIA.

3. AS YOU KNOW, BECAUSE OF ACUTE HOUSING, OFFICE AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT PROBLEMS, I HAVE CONSISTENTLY OPPOSED THE ASSIGNMENT OF ANY REGIONAL ATTACHES TO CAIRO. HAVE HAD AT LEAST TWENTY REQUESTS IN THE PAST THREE YEARS FOR SUCH REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS. ONCE WE BREACH THE DYKE, THE FLOOD WILL BE UPON US. THERE IS FRANKLY NO BETTER REASON FOR A REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE TO BE IN CAIRO THAN, SAY, SOME OF THE USIS REGIONAL OFFICERS AND OTHERS.

4. THE WHOLE PROBLEM IS MADE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT BY THE COMPLETE DISINTEREST OF THE AFL/CIO IN EGYPTIAN LABOR. INDEED, AT TIMES THIS HAS VERGED ON OPEN HOSTILITY. I RESPECT AFL/CIO VIEW, THOUGH I DISAGREE WITH IT. IT IS, OF COURSE, ARGUABLE THAT LABOR ATTACHE HERE WOULD HELP EASE THIS SITUATION. HOWEVER, IF WASHINGTON-BASED LABOR ADVISER--WITH DIRECT AND IMMEDIATE CONTACTS WITH AFL/CIO LEADERSHIP--WAS UNABLE TO DO SO, I HAVE TROUBLE BELIEVING THIS WILL IN ANY WAY CHANGE WITH LABOR ATTACHE HERE. FACT IS THAT EXISTING SHARPLY ANTAGONISTIC AFL/CIO LEADERSHIP ATTITUDES TOWARD EGYPT COULD MAKE PRESENCE OF REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE IN CAIRO POLITICALLY EMBARRASSING TO US IN BROADER SENSE.

5. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, I STRONGLY HOPE THAT IF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SECRETARY ACCEPTS DOL DESIRE TO REACTIVATE OVERSEAS SLOT, YOU WILL FIND SOME OTHER PLACE THAN CAIRO TO SITUATE HIM. HE WOULD BE TOTALLY REDUNDANT AND AN ADDITIONAL BURDEN ON OUR ALREADY OVERTAXED FACILITIES AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT SERVICES. AND HE WOULD NOT BE SUPPORTING US, WHO DO NOT NEED HIM, BUT OTHER AREA POSTS WHO APPARENTLY CLAIM THEY DO. ANY SUCH OFFICER SHOULD BE IN THE PLACE OF GREATEST NEED FOR HIS SERVICES.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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ISecure: 1
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